

**Town of Barrington
Economic Development Committee
Meeting Minutes (Amended)
January 21, 2016**

Members Present:

Matthew Amaral, Robert Humm, and Dick Wilbur.

Also present: Town Council liaison Michael Carroll.

1. Call to Order at 7:20 PM
2. December 17 Minutes were approved unanimously with two small amendments.
3. Chair Rob Humm and scribe Dick Wilbur reported on the status of the EDC section of the Town website. Dick Wilbur had emailed the approved text for this section to Merrie DeSisto and Jean Bellm before Christmas, but to date the updates to the Town website had not been completed nor is there evidence that the press release had been published or distributed. Rob noted that he was referred to Town staffer Phil Hervey for assistance with these issues. He and Mike Carroll agreed to follow up.
4. The meeting next continued its discussion of the question of whether the Town needed to create and hire a business liaison/economic development position. Matt had attended a meeting of the Barrington Business Association and Town parks and recreation coordinator earlier in the day, which met for the purposes of developing a 2016 calendar of community events the business community could use for planning purposes. Town Manager Peter DeAngelis was in attendance, and Matt shared his understanding of Mr. DeAngelis' views on the subject of a business liaison. In general, DeAngelis is not convinced that a new position needs to be created, suggesting that specific business liaison duties could be undertaken by existing Town staff. Mike suggested that the EDC's first order of business ought to be to identify whether specific duties need to be carried out and, if such a need is identified, to follow up with a list of to the Town Board of recommendations as to how to make this happen. The meeting discussed the activities of the Town's new Parks and Recreation liaison, and how town-wide activities organized by her office seem to be well received – and attended – by residents. Mike noted that he believed there is sympathy for the idea of creating a business liaison position among members of the Town Board, and that the question ought not to be whether there are problems with the support provided the business community by the Town but rather whether such a position could enhance and simplify conditions for businesses and improve the Town's reputation as a place to do business. Matt shared information regarding a new Business concierge position created by the City of Providence, noting that such a

position entails a large amount of customer service, information sharing and – in Dick’s words – cheerleading for the business community. As Town Manager DeAngelis knows well the history of Town support to business over the last four decades, his attendance at the March 10 EDC meeting will provide an opportunity to learn more about past efforts, successes and failures in providing liaison support. The Meeting agreed to continue this discussion at the February meeting and, among other things, prepare a list of topics to guide the discussion with Mr. DeAngelis on March 10.

5. The Meeting next returned to the discussion of issues related to Food Trucks in town. As Mark Etheridge was not present, the Meeting agreed to table the discussion until February, at which time attendees will hopefully be able to discuss relevant Town ordinances.
6. Signage: Again, with only three members, the Meeting agreed to continue discussion of the item in February. Members did identify some of the issues relevant to Signage, including the lengthy (up to three months) process for businesses to obtain permission for sign design, and the question of whether A-frame signs would/should be acceptable in Town. There was general agreement that the development of pre-approved signage templates would serve to speed up the approval process for business owners, and that this was one issue the EDC ought to consider seriously.
7. Future Meetings of the EDC were agreed upon, including Thursday, February 11 and Thursday, March 10.
8. The Meeting adjourned at 8:04 pm.